



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Laura Hamill

Title: An exploration into the digital Stop-the-Steal community in the United States

Programme/year: ISS/2023

Author of Evaluation (supervisor): Aliaksei Kazharski

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	10
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	25
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	30
<i>Total</i>		80	65
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	10
	Style	5	5
	Formal requirements	5	5
<i>Total</i>		20	20
TOTAL		100	85



Evaluation

Major criteria:

Minor criteria:

Assessment of plagiarism:

A 17% overlap according to the protocol in SIS. No plagiarism found.

Overall evaluation:

The thesis addresses the extremely important topic of radicalization on social networks as a factor of illiberal/populist politics. The author engages in digital ethnography to track how conspiracy theories about alleged election fraud in the US, promoted online by Donald Trump supporters, helped ferment the 2021 storming of the Capitol. The research presents us with interesting empirical findings and I hope that the author may consider converting them into something like a published work. Overall, the thesis is a success albeit there are certain shortcomings. The theory is very well spelled out, and it is indeed generally clear how the quest for significance (in other words, recognition or status) is a key part of the equation when it comes to radicalization and online conspiracy theory echo chambers. However, in terms of the actual empirical analysis the chosen theory is not sufficiently connected to the empirical part. That results in the analysis being more descriptive: it successfully unpacks and explains the visual and textual tropes but does not do enough to connect them to the theoretical framework. Also, a general summary or/and a table of trope types at the end could have been helpful. Having said that, I would nevertheless praise the author for her diligent approach to providing empirical material in the text of the thesis.

Suggested grade: B (85)

Signature:



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